

MONTANA SENATE
2007 LEGISLATURE

ROLL CALL

FINANCE AND CLAIMS

DATE 4-4-07

NAMES	PRESENT	ABSENT	EXCUSED
SEN. KEITH BALES (R)	✓		
SEN. GREGORY BARKUS (R)	✓		
SEN. JOHN BRUEGGEMAN (R)			
SEN. JOHN COBB (R)	✓		
SEN. MIKE COONEY (D)	✓		
SEN. STEVE GALLUS (D)	✓		
SEN. KEN HANSEN (D)	✓		
SEN. RICK LAIBLE (R)	✓		
SEN. LANE LARSON (D)	✓		
SEN. DAVE LEWIS (R)	✓		
SEN. GREG LIND(D)	✓		
SEN. COREY STAPLETON (R)	✓		
SEN. BILL TASH (R)	✓		
SEN. MITCH TROPILA (D)	✓		
SEN. DAVE WANZENRIED (D)	✓		
SEN. DAN WEINBERG (D)	✓		
SEN. CAROL WILLIAMS (D)	✓		
SEN. BOB HAWKS (D), VICE CHAIRMAN	✓		
SEN. TRUDI SCHMIDT (D), CHAIRWOMAN	✓		
TARYN PURDY, LSD	✓		
PRUDENCE GILDROY, COMMITTEE SECRETARY	✓		

**MONTANA STATE SENATE
2007 LEGISLATURE**

VISITOR REGISTER

FINANCE AND CLAIMS

DATE April 4

BILLS BEING HEARD TODAY HB 315 HB 114 HB 395 HB 407
HB 592 HB 577 HB 616 HB 627
PLEASE PRINT

NAME	PHONE	REPRESENTING	BILL #	SUPPORT	OPPOSE
DAN O'NEILL	484-1316	MT Dent Assoc	RIDE	✓	
Jim Jacobson	449-7233	Net Am Legion	HB 572	X	
Sami Butler	457-4755	Intermountain / MCI	HB 577	✓	
REP. HEINERT	293-9813	LIBBY/Troy	HB 407	✓	
Ronnie Wiggers	899-5165	MT Coin Machine Operators	HB 616	X	
Rich E Miller	449-2481	Gaming Industry Assoc	HB 616	X	
Gerald Mueller	543-0026	Self	HB 407	X	
Bruce Blum	293-9274	Lincoln Co Health Office	HB 407	✓	
Greg Chellier	293-4100	ARDNet	HB 407	✓	
Tanis Hernandez	293-9274	Self	HB 407	✓	
LeRoy Thom	293-8731	LIBBY	HB 407	✓	
Jane Smolin	444-4141	DPHHS	HB 407		
Jan Sanders	293-9438	Self	HB 407	✓	
Danise Pizzini	444-2644	DPHHS	HB 407	Inf.	
Duane Preslinger	444-4145	DPHHS	HB 577		
Dor Jucke	459-1708	Self	HB 407	X	
Carly Conover	581-7563	MUS	HB 395		X
JAN ANTONIETTI	443-2592	VFU	HB 592	X	
Tom Thzery	441-7531	Project Energy, Avista, PGE, Pacific Corp	HB 114	X	
Leo Berry	443-6820	ANP	HB 114	X	
Terry Kendrick	459-9440	WHEEL	HB 577	X	

PLEASE LEAVE PREPARED STATEMENT WITH COMMITTEE SECRETARY

FINANCE AND CLAIMS

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April 4

BILLS BEING HEARD TODAY

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[illegible]

PLEASE LEAVE PREPARED STATEMENT WITH COMMITTEE SECRETARY

Testimony in Support of HB 407
Before the Senate Finance and Claims Committee
April 4, 2007

Chairwoman Schmidt, members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 407. My name is Gerald Mueller. I live at 440 Evans in Missoula, and my telephone number is 543-0026.

Since February of 2000, I have had the privilege of acting as the facilitator for the Libby Community Advisory Group, known by its acronym CAG. CAG was established by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) shortly after it came to Libby to begin the investigation and cleanup of the asbestos contamination. EPA created CAG to provide a regular, formal means of communicating with the people of Libby about the cleanup and issues related to it. From February 2000 through March 2002, CAG met twice a month, and since then it has met almost every month. In the last 7 years, I have traveled to Libby to facilitate CAG meetings some 100 times.

My support for this bill is a result of the knowledge I have gained in my role as the CAG facilitator. However, I testify as an individual. I am not representing CAG or any organization or group.

According to a recent story in the *Washington Post*, when the EPA declared Libby a Superfund site, it called the contamination "the most horrific environmental disaster in this country's history." Through my window as the CAG facilitator, I have watched the Libby community respond as the facts about this disaster came to light. While Libby people are certainly victims of decades of asbestos exposure, they have not acted the typical victim role, passively complaining about their fate. Instead, they have acted to understand and address their situation to make it better. They have sought the best available information about how this disaster has affected their families, their homes, their schools, and their businesses. They are insisting that their community be properly cleaned of asbestos so that no one else need suffer asbestos-related disease. They are seeking support for research into the mechanisms of and treatments for asbestos-related disease. And they are seeking funding to help people who have and will suffer disease pay for the medical, social, and personal services they require.

And the latter is the purpose of HB 407. The people of Libby need help paying their medical bills now. HB 407, as amended in the House, provides \$2 million of needed help to Libby people now. HB407 originally requested \$3 million for the coming biennium. In a state with a purported billion dollar surplus, \$3 million is a small price to pay to help alleviate the suffering caused by asbestos-related disease.

While HB will provide needed help now, the reality, of course, is that this amount will not come close to paying all of the health care bills that are and will continue to come due over the coming decades. Asbestos-related diseases have latency periods of 10 to 40 years. The mine and associated processing facilities shut down in 1990. The EPA cleanup did not begin until 1999. More disease is coming. On their own, the people of Libby and their health care system will not be able to pay for the medical and other care that asbestos-related disease sufferers will require.

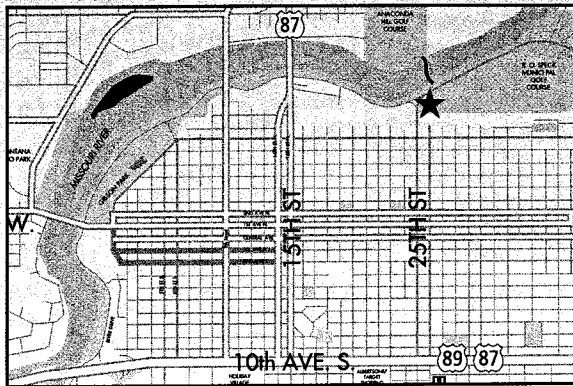
Government exists to protect the public health and welfare. No level of government, not federal, not state, and not local protected the people of Libby. In addition to helping meet immediate needs, the three levels of government need work together to assure that a long-term source of funding exists to support the provision of medical services for asbestos-related disease sufferers resulting from the "most horrific environmental disaster in this country's history."

Thank you.

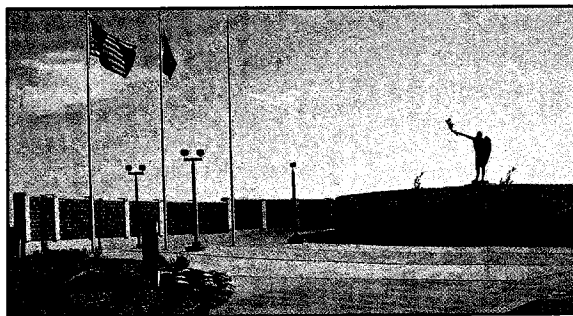




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*"From patriotic men and women
springs living nations"*
Padraic Pearse